Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony. I am Cortney Worrall, COO at the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance. The Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance (MWA) is a coalition of over 640 businesses, community and recreational groups, educational institutions, and other stakeholders committed to transforming the New York and New Jersey Harbor and its waterways to make them cleaner and more accessible, a vibrant place to play, learn and work with great parks, great jobs and great transportation for all.

MWA commends New York City for its progressive leadership in addressing climate change impacts on the City. New York City is recognized nationwide for its climate change assessments, mitigation strategies, and adaptation strategies. We support the proposed amendments to Local Law 22 and look forward to working with the City on this and more of the City’s climate change work.

MWA and many of its partners have a unique perspective on climate change adaptation that we believe should be reflected in the proposed amendments. The New York City waterfront is particularly vulnerable to impacts from climate change be it the frequency and intensity of
storms, sea level rise, or local flooding due to storm surges. Therefore we propose additional language regarding the New York City waterfront and other edits to the proposed amendments.

The New York City Waterfront Management Advisory Board was newly reinstated as of last year and has begun to meet twice per year to review progress on the City’s implementation of the New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan. Goal 8 of the Comprehensive Waterfront Plan - *Identify and pursue strategies to increase the city’s resilience to climate change and sea level rise* – describes the challenges facing the City’s waterfront. This includes impacts to parks, esplanades, piers, beaches and boat launches; residential and commercial buildings; the working waterfront and industrial areas of the waterfront; and impacts on our transportation system from storm surges and flooding from climate change and sea level rise. For these reasons MWA recommends including on the New York City Panel on Climate Change representatives of waterfront related non-governmental organizations and one to two representatives of the New York City Waterfront Management Advisory Board. Specific edits to the amendments that we recommend are:

**j. New York city panel on climate change.** 1. There shall be a New York city panel on climate change whose members shall include but not be limited to, climate scientists and experts, academics, private sector practitioners, including legal, insurance, and risk management experts, representatives of waterfront oriented non-governmental organizations, and representatives of the Waterfront Management Advisory Board who shall be appointed by the mayor.
MWA also recommends that in subsection iv the following language is included to ensure plans such as the New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan that include climate change sections are included in the assessment of plans given new findings and climate change predictions:

**vi. Adaptation plan assessment. Analysis and assessment of the New York city climate change adaptation task force’s, or any other applicable department or office’s, active or adopted adaptation plans or sections of plans that address climate change impacts in light of the panel’s current findings and predictions on climate change data and impacts.**

In order to make sure the panel is effective and responsive to a changing environment, MWA recommends the panel meet at least once every year as opposed to the once every two years that was proposed in the original amendment. Many successful climate change working groups, around the country meet as frequently as a bi-monthly basis. In addition we propose the addition of the word “waterfront” to section 2 to charge the panel with the task of analyzing specific threats to the City’s waterfront and developing an adaptation strategy to mitigate these risks as part of the report produced by the panel. Specifically we recommend:

**2. i. The panel shall meet at least once every year for the purpose of developing climate change projections for New York city and tools to assist the city's climate change adaptation task force, or any other applicable department or office, in implementing procedures, actions, and programs to address current and future impacts on critical New York city infrastructure, waterfront, and on vulnerable citizens.**
MWA’s general recommendations include more specific information about metrics for climate change indicators. We suggest changing this section of the amendment to read as follows:

ii. Indicators and monitoring. Discussion and analysis of indicators to monitor for climate change data, which shall include, but not be limited to, the atmospheric carbon dioxide levels, greenhouse gas emissions, global and regional sea level, seasonal anomalies in polar ice melting, and any advances in climate science and technology that can aid in measuring and analyzing this data.

MWA recommends that before determining climate risks factors and infrastructure impacts policymakers must first look at climate change scenarios. For this reason, we suggest swapping Section 3.iv. with Section 3.v. Analyzing and assessing climate change scenarios will give decision makers the background to determine focus areas for mitigation and adaptation strategies. The analysis for determining climate risk factors and infrastructure impacts should assess the physical, economic and social vulnerability under varying climate scenarios.

The proposed amendment states that the panel will meet to develop tools to assist in “implementing procedures, actions, and programs to address current and future impacts on…vulnerable citizens”. In order for this to be effective, a method of communication between the panel and vulnerable citizens must be established. In order to accomplish this we are proposing the following addition to Section 3 of the amendment:

vii. The panel should develop a community or borough-level communications strategy in
order to ensure the public is informed about the findings of the panel. As part of this strategy, the panel should aim to create a brief, high-level version of the report that can be distributed to City residents, particularly those who have been deemed “vulnerable citizens” in order to educate them about potential risks and the adaptation measures that can be taken to mitigate those risks.

To ensure the effectiveness of communication measures it will be essential to gauge the current level of knowledge and opinions on climate change and how it will affect New York City as well as the willingness of residents to learn about climate change in order to take action. It will be essential for the panel to take advantage of existing modes of communication or through public forums. Some existing modes of communication include the City’s website, newsletters, community boards, and through community-based organizations to gather this information and to distribute educational information. Including information on climate risks, storm vulnerabilities and emergency evacuation procedures can also be effectively communicated through inclusion on tax bills, signs on public transit, and at events. MWA welcomes New York City to participate in City of Water Day on July 14, 2012, an event attracting over 20,000 residents in New York City alone by providing climate change adaptation resources and information at a booth or a table.

MWA’s 2012 Waterfront Conference will be held on May 18, 2012 and will include a panel devoted to the topic of climate change adaptation. The panel will address the ways we can move forward as a region in the implementation of the New York State, New York City, and New Jersey municipal climate change adaptation strategies. Implementation of any climate change adaptation strategy will involve many levels of political, jurisdictional, planning, and financial
complexity that we are only beginning to address. MWA looks forward to increasing the level of dialogue about these issues and working with its government partners and Alliance Partners to work for progress in climate change adaptation planning and implementation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I’d be happy to answer any questions you might have. The full text of MWA’s recommended edits to the amendments are as follows.